15

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR

(2015-16)

(SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

MINISTRY OF TEXTILES

[Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Ninth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Review of Urban Haats]

FIFTEENTH REPORT

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

March, 2016/Phalguna, 1937 (Saka)

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Presented to Lok Sabha on 15.03.2016

Laid in Rajya Sabha on 15.03.2016

LOK SABHA SECRETARIAT

NEW DELHI

March, 2016/Phalguna, 1937 (Saka)

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COMPOSITION OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR (2015-16)

DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR-CHAIRPERSON

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Rajya Sabha

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31. Shri N. Gokulkrishnan

SECRETARIAT

1.	Shri K. Vijayakrishnan	-	Additional Secretary
2.	Shri Ashok Sajwan	-	Director
3.	Shri D.R. Mohanty	-	Additional Director
4.	Smt. Archana Srivastva	-	Under Secretary

INTRODUCTION

I, the Chairperson, Standing Committee on Labour (2015-16), having been authorized by the Committee, do present on their behalf this Fifteenth Report on Action Taken by the Government on the Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Ninth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Review of Urban Haats relating to the Ministry of Textiles.

2. The Ninth Report was presented to Lok Sabha and laid in Rajya Sabha on 12th August, 2015. The Ministry of Textiles furnished their replies indicating action taken on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Ninth Report on 6th November, 2015. The Committee considered and adopted the Draft Report at their sitting held on 11th March, 2016.

3. An analysis of the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations contained in the Ninth Report of the Standing Committee on Labour (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) is given at Appendix-II.

4. For ease of reference, Observations/ Recommendations of the Committee have been printed in thick type in the body of the Report.

New Delhi;
11 March, 2016
21 Phalguna,1937 (Saka)

DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR
CHAIRPERSON
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR

CHAPTER-I

REPORT

This Report deals with the action taken by the Government on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Ninth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on Review of Urban Haats.

2. The Ninth Report was presented to Lok Sabha/laid in Rajya Sabha on 12th August, 2015. It contained 20 Observations/Recommendations. Replies of the Government in respect of all the Recommendations have been received and are categorized as under:-

(i)	Recommendations/Observations which have been accepted by the Government – **Para Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20**	**Total: 15 percentage:75**
(ii)	Recommendations/Observations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of the Government's reply – **NIL**	**NIL**
(iii)	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government have not been accepted by the Committee and which require reiteration – **Para No. 3, 10, 13 and 18**	**Total: 04 Percentage:20**
(iv)	Recommendations/Observations in respect of which replies of the Government are interim in nature- **Para No.12**	**Total:01 Percentage: 5**

3. The Committee desire that Action Taken Note in respect of Observations/Recommendations contained in Chapter I and final action taken replies in respect of the Recommendation contained in Chapter V for which interim reply has been given by the Government may be furnished to them at the earliest.

I. Delay in setting up of some Urban Haats

(Recommendation Para No. 2)

4. In their earlier Report, the Committee had observed that nine Urban Haats were under different stages of construction. Expressing concern towards the inordinate delay in completion of some projects which were sanctioned way back in 2003 (Hazaribag Project), 2007 (Indore and Agartala projects) and 2008 (Jhansi project), the Committee urged the Ministry to impress upon the Implementing Agencies concerned to initiate urgent requisite measures and expedite the completion of the under progress Urban Haats so as to accomplish the intended objective of establishing direct marketing facilities for the benefit of the handicraft artisans/ handloom weavers.

5. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:

> "It is submitted that the matter has been taken up with the respective implementing agencies on various occasions and will be followed up in future also."

6. The Committee note the assurance given by the Ministry that they have been taking up the matter of delay in the completion of Urban Haats with the respective Implementing Agencies and they will continue to follow up the matter in future too. Since the sanctioned projects have been languishing since long despite persuasions by the Ministry, the Committee are of the firm opinion that the matter needs to be pursued more vigorously with the Implementing Agencies concerned so that there is no further time and cost overrun and the said Urban Haats are set up for the benefit of artisans and weavers. The Committee would like to be apprised of the concrete progress made in this regard within three months of the presentation of this Report.

II. Cancellation of 13 Sanctioned Urban Haats

(Recommendation Para No. 3)

7. In their earlier Report, the Committee had expressed their displeasure over the inadequate efforts of the Ministry in conducting adequate survey/study to find out the root cause of the poor response of the Implementing Agencies concerned to set up the sanctioned Urban Haats leading to the cancellation of 13 such sanctioned Urban Haats in States like Maharashtra, U.P., Gujarat, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, etc. The Committee, therefore, impressed upon the Ministry to undertake periodical studies/surveys and plug the extant loopholes so as to avoid cancellation of sanctioned projects, besides encouraging the Implementing Agencies to set up the targeted Urban Haats.

8. In their Action Taken Note, the Ministry have merely stated "Noted".

9. The Committee are quite unhappy to note the casual reply of the Ministry to such an important recommendation. The Ministry have not stated any specific action taken by them to conduct periodic studies/surveys to ascertain the root cause of the poor response of the Implementing Agencies in setting up the sanctioned Urban Haats. The Committee, therefore, again exhort the Ministry to undertake the requisite studies/surveys so as to avoid the recurrence of cancellation of sanctioned Urban Haats for want of adequate response from the Implementing Agencies. The Committee also impress upon the Ministry to desist from giving casual replies like "Noted", etc. to the considered suggestion of the Committee while furnishing Action Taken Notes in future.

III. Non-Setting up of Mini Urban haat

(Recommendation Para No. 8)

10. In their Ninth Report, the Committee had observed that a concept of Mini Urban Haat had been introduced during the 12th Plan in order to extend the facilities of Urban Haats to smaller cities and tourist networks. Consequent upon a joint strategy evolved by the Ministry of Textiles and the Ministry of Tourism in January, 2015, way-side amenities like Chokidani, Suraj Kund Mela, etc. were to be developed on similar lines as Mini Urban Haat. However, the Committee noted with concern that not a single Mini Urban Haat had been set up, reportedly because of non-receipt of any proposal from the Implementing Agencies due to non-availability of land at strategic locations. As per the Ministry's own admission, the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir had recently expressed interest in setting up a few Mini Urban Haats in the State. The Committee had, therefore, urged the Ministry to motivate and encourage the Implementing Agencies in evincing interest to set up Mini Urban Haats so as to extend the much needed facility to the poor artisans and weavers in small towns to directly market their products.

11. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:

" Noted. States are being requested from time to time."

12. The Committee are not convinced with this reply of the Ministry because even if the States are being requested by them from time to time, not a single mini Urban Haat has been set up so far in the country defeating the very purpose of the joint strategy evolved in January, 2015 between the Ministries of Textiles and Tourism. Since almost all the States are promoting tourism, the concept of Mini Urban Haat would be an added interest for the tourists, especially foreign tourists besides being a source of income for artisans/weavers residing in small towns. The

Committee, therefore, urge that some kind of motivation and encouragement be considered and given to the Implementing Agencies to indentify and make available land at strategic locations for setting up of Mini Urban Haats so that poor artisans/weavers are able to avail the opportunity of showcasing and directly marketing their products. The Committee would also like to be informed of the progress made in setting up Mini Urban Haats in the State of Jammu & Kashmir which has evinced interest in this regard.

IV. Delay in issuance of Identity Cards

(Recommendation Para No. 10)

13. In their Ninth Report, the Committee had noted that issuance of Identity Cards had been started in 2005 and out of the identified 68.86 lakh Handicraft artisans, only about 25 lakh artisan could be issued I-Cards. Similarly, out of the 43.31 lakh identified Handloom weavers, I-Cards had been issued to around 31.13 lakh weavers across the country since 2009. Expressing concern over the slow pace of issuance of I-Cards to the artisans/weavers, the Committee had suggested that the Ministry should urgently decentralize the process of issuance of I-Cards and organise awareness camps with the help of District Administration and Implementing Agencies to proactively accelerate issuance of I-Cards to the left out artisans / weavers in a time bound manner so that they were not only able to avail facilities like social security schemes but also to participate in fairs/ exhibitions, both within and outside the country.

14. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:

> "As per third Handloom Census (2009-10) there are 43.31 lakh handloom & allied workers across the country. Of this, 38.46 lakh are 18 years &

above (Adult) to whom photo identity cards were required to be issued. However, on the request of some NER States, Manipur in particular, Plastic Identity Cards (PIC) were not printed. Similarly, for some border area States like West Bengal requested for not issuing PICs to avoid migration from the adjoining States. Thus, only 31.13 lakh I-Cards have been prepared and distributed through States concerned. State Governments concerned have now been asked to conduct survey and issue I/card themselves for the left out handloom weavers/allied workers.

For handicraft artisans, advertisement has been published in leading Newspapers regarding submission of fresh application form of I.Card of handicrafts artisans at concern M&SECs/field offices of the DC(Handicrafts).

Proposal is under consideration for decentralising the process of preparing of I.Cards of handicrafts artisans.

Awareness drive/Camps are being planned at each M&SEC/Field office for I.Cards for handicrafts artisans."

15. The Committee are deeply concerned to note that out of the 38.46 lakh Adult Handloom Weavers and allied workers, photo I-Cards have been issued to only 31.13 lakh such workers. What worries the Committee is the reported reservations on the part of some States like Manipur and West Bengal in issuing Plastic Identity Cards (PICs) to the Handloom Weavers on the premise of avoiding migration of such workers from adjoining States. The Ministry of Textiles on their part have now asked the State Governments to conduct survey and issue I-Cards themselves for the left out Handloom weavers and allied workers. The Committee fail to understand as to why the Ministry acceded to such requests from the State Governments, apparently without taking up the matter at the Chief Minister/Chief Secretary level. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to take up the matter with appropriate authorities so that I-

Cards are issued to the remaining 7.33 lakh adult Handloom Weavers and allied workers at an early date.

16. The Committee find that there are 43.31 lakh Handloom and allied workers across the Country as per the Third Handloom Census (2009-10) whereas I-Cards are required to be issued to 38.46 lakh workers who are adults (18 years and above). The Committee are left wondering about the fate of the remaining 5 lakh odd Handloom/allied workers who have not attained the age of 18. Needless to say, if persons below the age of 18 are legally permitted to work in the Handloom industry, they should also be issued I-Cards by the Government. If such persons are not permitted to work, the Ministry should have taken up the matter at the appropriate fora. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to look into the matter and take appropriate action as they deem fit under intimation to the Committee.

17. In their earlier Report, the Committee had observed that out of the identified 68.86 lakh Handicraft Artisans, I-Cards have been issued to only 25 lakh such artisans. The Committee are distressed to note that in their Action Taken Note the Ministry have not updated the position which implies that no more I-Cards have been issued to the artisans between the presentation of the Committee's earlier Report and submission of the Ministry's Action Taken Note. The Committee call for an explanation on this matter from the Ministry, especially on the abysmally slow pace of issuing I-Cards to the Handicraft artisans. It is no consolation that advertisement has been published in leading newspapers for submission of fresh applications for issuance of I Cards to the artisans. The Committee are of the considered view that the efforts made in this regard have to be further intensified, including publicity through the NGOs, Training Partners, Self Help Groups, Service Centres, etc. who have direct and regular interactions with the artisans and who are in a better position to

explain to them the advantages of possessing I-Cards and the consequential benefits of Social Security Schemes.

V. Participation of Artisans in Fairs/Exhibitions

(Recommendation Para No. 13)

18. In their earlier Report, the Committee had noted that selection of artisans to participate in fairs/exhibitions was done through a lottery system on the basis of applications received in response to the advertisements in newspapers with the stipulation that the interested artisans who had not taken part in any fair/ exhibitions in the previous one year should apply at the nearest Handicrafts Office. The Committee had recommended that the selection procedure of the artisans' participation in fairs/ festivals should be made more transparent and foolproof so that the same group of artisans is not repeatedly picked up and each and every artisan in the country get an opportunity to showcase his/her product in popular Melas/ Bazaars.

19. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have as follows:

> " For participation of artisans in the exhibitions/fairs, an advertisement is floated in the leading newspapers. After receiving applications, the same are scrutinized at various stages and due care is given that there is no repetition and allotment be made to genuine artisans by following approved guidelines. Moreover, preference is also given to the award winning artisans/weavers for participation in the melas/event."

20. While taking note of the Ministry's submissions, the Committee, however, desire that in addition to giving advertisements in leading newspapers, publicity for participation in Fairs/ Melas/ Exhibitions should also be made through the electronic media, NGOs, etc. so that maximum number of artisans/weavers become aware of such Fairs/ Melas/ Exhibitions and can participate in them. The Committee also

desire that apart from according preference to award winning artisans/weavers, the Ministry should endeavour and encourage the participation of upcoming artisans/weavers so as to enable them to showcase their products and display their talent/expertise in popular Melas/Bazars.

VI. Dedicated Helpline Telephone number for redressal of complaints/gtrievances

(Recommendation Para No. 15)

21. Observing the system of a centralised portal, the Committee, in their Ninth Report, had desired that a dedicated Helpline telephone number should also be put in place to address various professional queries of the artisans/ weavers, besides redressing their grievances.

22. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:

> "The Department of Administrative Reform and Public Grievances, Government of India has a centralized portal for public grievances namely CPGRAMS wherein artisans/weavers can also address complaints/grievance.
>
> For any enquiry/grievances, telephone number of nodal officer is given on each and every publicity material. The applicant is free to get his grievance if any, brought in the notice of the nodal officer and he/she can also contact nearest Handicraft Marketing & Service Extension Centres and Weaver's Service Centre."

23. The Committee note that artisans/weavers can lodge their complaints through a centralised portal as well as through the nodal officer and Service Centres for redressal. The Committee, in their earlier recommendation, had suggested the creation of a special Helpline number for addressing various professional queries of artisans/ weavers, besides redressing their grievances. The Committee feel that it should not be that difficult for the Ministry to create a dedicated Helpline to receive

and address varied professional queries of artisans/ weavers. They, therefore, desire that the Ministry should make an endeavour to set up a dedicated Helpline number on the lines of the "Kisan Helpline" so that the professional queries of artisans/weavers can be appropriately attended to by experts in the field.

VII. Inadequate Stipend Provision

(Recommendation Para No.18)

24. In their earlier Report, the Committee had been constrained to note that a paltry sum Rs. 100/- per day was being given as stipend to weavers for attending any training or design development programme, which dissuaded them from attending such programmes as they could get at least Rs. 250/- per day under MNREGA. As the Guidelines in this regard were under modification, the Committee had impressed upon the Ministry to finalise the Guidelines soon and ensure that the stipend amount was reasonably enhanced so as to motivate the weavers to attend training programmes.

25. In their Action Taken Note furnished to the Committee, the Ministry of Textiles have stated as follows:

> "Presently, stipend to the trainees is being given as per the rates prescribed for semi-skilled workers by the O/o Chief Labour Commissioner, Ministry of Labour & Employment, vide their order dated 30.03.2015."

26. The Committee do not subscribe to the reasoning offered by the Ministry, as the rates of stipend for semi-skilled workers may differ from State to State which amounts to discrimination towards the weavers residing in States where the stipend amount may be comparatively lower. The Committee, therefore, recommend that the rate of stipend should be

made uniform all over India and be fixed by the DC (Handicraft) who has pan-India jurisdiction. The Committee further urge the Ministry to finalise the guidelines expeditiously so that the rate of stipend is suitably enhanced across the country which in turn would encourage and motivate the weavers to attend the training programmes to hone their skills.

New Delhi;
11 March, 2016
21 Phalguna,1937 (Saka)

DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR
CHAIRPERSON
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR

CHAPTER-II

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE GOVERNMENT

(Recommendation No. 1)

The Committee note that the main objective of the scheme of setting up of the Urban Haats is to establish a permanent marketing infrastructure in towns/ metropolitan cities to provide direct marketing facilities to the handicrafts artisans/ handloom weavers and enable them to sell their products round the year to a wider targeted audience/ customers. In pursuance of that objective, the Ministry have been facilitating setting up of Urban Haats, which are owned, managed and operated by Implementing Agencies such as the State Handicrafts/ Handlooms Development Corporations/ Tourism Development Corporations / Urban local bodies. The Committee's examination of the subject has brought to the fore the fact that substantial improvements are warranted in the implementation of the scheme for actualising those objectives. The Committee have accordingly given their considered opinion in the succeeding paragraphs.

Reply of the Government

Due attention is being given on the opinion of Committee.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 2)

The Committee are deeply concerned to find that since the inception of the Scheme, out of the 48 Urban Haats sanctioned, as many as 13 were cancelled due to inadequate response from the Implementing Agencies (State Government Bodies). Out of the remaining 35 Urban Haats, 26 Haats are functional and 09 Haats are under different stages of construction. The Committee are distressed to note that out of the 09 under progress Urban Haats, some projects which were sanctioned way back in 2003 (Hazaribag project), 2007 (Indore and Agartala projects) and 2008 (Jhansi project) are yet to be completed. The Committee take a serious view of such inordinate delay in the completion of the projected Urban Haats and urge the Ministry to impress upon the Implementing Agencies concerned to initiate urgent requisite measures and expedite the completion of the under progress Urban Haats so

that the intended objective of establishing direct marketing facilities for the benefit of the handicraft artisans/ handloom weavers is accomplished.

Reply of the Government

It is submitted that the matter has been taken up with the respective implementing agencies on various occasions and will be followed up in future also.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 4)

The Committee note that there is no proposal before the Ministry to revive the cancelled Urban Haats. So far as recovery of the funds released for such Haats is concerned, the Committee find that funds were released in 08 cases out of the 13 cancelled Urban Haats. In 03 cases, the released funds have been recovered whereas in the remaining 05 cases the Ministry have requested the organisations concerned to refund the released amount along with penal interest. To the Committee's dismay, the Ministry have submitted before the Committee that in most of the cases, the Implementing Agencies have returned the released funds whereas the facts and figures, also submitted by the Ministry themselves, prove otherwise. Therefore, the Committee stress that the Ministry ought to intensify their efforts for speedy recovery of these funds.

Reply of the Government

Noted for compliance.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 5)

The Committee are informed that the DC(Handicrafts) undertakes surprise visits to the fields offices to gauge the actual implementation of the scheme as and when the need is felt based on the feedback of the monitoring done by the field officers. But the Committee are concerned to note that the periodicity of such visits has not been prescribed. In view of the fact that DC(Handicrafts) along with DC(Handlooms) are part of the Governing Council under whose overall control the scheme is being monitored, the Committee

emphasize that the periodicity of surprise visits of DC(Handicrafts) to the field offices should be prescribed so as to ensure effective and better implementation of the scheme as well as proper maintenance and upkeep of the infrastructure set up for the purpose.

Reply of the Government

Noted for compliance.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 6)

The Committee note that the terminal evaluation study of the marketing support and services schemes conducted by M/s AC Nielsen ORG-MARG had pointed out that the Urban Haats lacked proper infrastructure facilities and as such had recommended that proper infrastructure must be provided to increase the sale of products. Based on the suggestion, the Ministry are reportedly taking corrective measures and have instructed the Implementing Agencies to ensure the provisioning of proper infrastructure for the newly sanctioned Urban Haats. Further, additional financial support to the existing Urban Haats is being proposed to enable these Haats to upgrade their infrastructure. The Committee feel that these are steps in right direction and should be pursued vigorously as deficient infrastructure facilities will defeat the very purpose and objective of the scheme. The Committee further desire that similar evaluation studies/ surveys should be carried out by third parties from time to time so that shortcomings, if any, are rectified expeditiously and the scheme is drawn to its logical conclusion.

Reply of the Government

It is submitted the matter has been taken up with the respective implementing agencies.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

Recommendation No. 7)

The Committee appreciate that during the 12th Plan, some improvements like reduction in the area of land required to set up Urban

Haats, augmentation and upgradation of the infrastructure, etc. have been effected. Further, in order to avoid overlapping of responsibility and funding, the joint funding system by DC(Handicrafts) and DC(Handlooms) has been separated. While commending the innovative measures initiated, the Committee would like the Ministry to strengthen their monitoring system so that further improvements can be effected to make the Urban Haat endeavour a real success.

Reply of the Government

Action has been taken accordingly and state-wise officers have been nominated for monitoring.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 8)

The Committee observe that in order to extend the concept of Urban Haats to smaller cities and tourist networks, a component of Mini Urban Haat has been introduced during the 12th Plan. The Committee also note that consequent upon a joint strategy evolved by the Ministry of Textiles and the Ministry of Tourism in January, 2015, it is proposed to develop way-side amenities like Chokidani, Suraj Kund Mela, etc. on similar lines as Mini Urban Haat. But the Committee note with concern that not a single Mini Urban Haat has been set up so far in the country, reportedly due to non-receipt of any proposal from the Implementing Agencies. The Ministry have reasoned that since Mini Urban Haats is a new component and land is not available at strategic locations, the Implementing Agencies have not forwarded any proposal for the purpose. The Committee are not convinced with the reasoning of the Ministry, keeping in mind the fact that it is more than three years since the component of Mini Urban Haat was conceptualised. Needless to say, by this time, the scheme should have gathered momentum. Moreover, as per the Ministry's own admission, the State Government of Jammu & Kashmir has recently expressed interest in setting up a few Mini Urban Haats in the State. The Committee, therefore, urge the Ministry to motivate and encourage the Implementing Agencies in evincing interest to set up Mini Urban Haats so that the poor artisans and weavers in small towns are enabled to avail the much needed facility to directly market their products.

Reply of the Government

Noted. States are being requested from time to time.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 9)

The Committee note with serious concern the alleged exploitation of the poor and illiterate artisans/ weavers by the middlemen. The DC (Handicrafts) have submitted before the Committee that formation of cooperatives and federations of such artisans is the ultimate objective of the Ministry's cluster development programme by which the role of middlemen could be eliminated. The Committee, therefore, call upon the Ministry to make strenuous efforts towards forming as many cooperatives and self-help groups as possible to eliminate the middlemen from the scene and protect the genuine interests of the artisans/ weavers. It is also imperative to ensure that these cooperatives are not hijacked by vested interests and the very purpose of setting up the cooperatives is not defeated.

Reply of the Government

To eliminate the role of middleman, Office of the Development Commissioner for Handicrafts has initiated various steps/schemes. In this series Government of India is emphasizing of e-commerce to enable the artisans/weavers to sell their products directly. Moreover, cooperatives and direct artisans/weavers are given preference and middle man are discouraged.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 11)

The Committee note that specific events like the Gandhi Shilp Bazaar, Craft Bazaar, National Handicrafts Fair, Exhibitions, etc. are being organised to provide more interactions/ platforms to the artisans to sell their products. Similar events are also organised for the weavers as well. Further, to encourage and support the artisans/ weavers to pursue their activities, raw material banks have been established in various parts of the country, depending upon the need to provide services like technology, raw material assistance, etc. The Committee also appreciate that testing labs have been set up to provide

compliance certifications to handicraft products and credits cards are issued to the artisans/ weavers by the Banks with the help of the Office of the DC(Handicrafts). While taking note of the various initiatives taken by the Ministry to support and encourage the artisans/ weavers, the Committee would like the Ministry to strengthen the monitoring mechanism at the field level to ensure that efforts made for the purpose do not remain on paper only and the intended benefits are actually availed by the artisans/ weavers.

Reply of the Government

Noted for compliance. Field Offices are being monitored.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 14)

The Committee observe that information to the artisans/ weavers regarding exhibitions, melas, craft bazaars and other marketing support and service schemes is disseminated through newspaper advertisements, issue of public notices and organisation of various awareness programmes by the field offices and also through the organisation of local/ State level workshops organised from time to time. The Committee feel that these are steps in the right direction and should be continued with. At the same time, the Committee recommend that the Ministry of Textiles may tie up with the Ministry of Information & Broadcasting to explore the feasibility of disseminating such information also through Radio and Television advertisements so as to make sure that artisans/ weavers living in remote and rural areas are also benefited.

Reply of the Government

Noted please.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 15)

The Committee observe that there is a centralised portal to receive and address complaints/ grievances of the artisans/ weavers. The Committee desire that a dedicated Helpline telephone number should also be put in place

to address various professional queries of the artisans/ weavers, besides redressing their grievances.

Reply of the Government

The Department of Administrative Reform and Public Grievances, Government of India has a centralized portal for public grievances namely CPGRAMS wherein artisans/weavers can also address complaints/grievance.

For any enquiry/grievances, telephone number of nodal officer is given on each and every publicity material. The applicant is free to get his grievance if any, brought in the notice of the nodal officer and he/she can also contact nearest Handicraft Marketing & Service Extension Centres and Weaver's Service Centre.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 16)

The Committee note that a book titled 'Handmade in India' listing all the age-old crafts which existed in India, their status today and areas they were practised and their specialities is being published for the benefit of the artisans/ weavers. As most of the artisans/ weavers may not have access to such publications, the Committee desire that the DC(Handicrafts) and DC (Handlooms) should organise periodic interactive sessions with the artisans/ weavers from different parts of the country and encourage them to exchange ideas/ techniques amongst themselves to hone their skills and improve marketing strategies, besides introducing particular area specific products to other areas as well. The Committee also recommend that the Guru Shishya Parampara training programme being organised by the Ministry for a duration of one year at present be increased to at least two years so that the knowledge, technique and expertise of one generation are effectively passed on to the next generation and, thus, the age-old talents are retained.

Reply of the Government

Schemes being run by DC(Handicrafts) have been reviewed and suitably amended. Publicity efforts would be augmented.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 17)

The Committee note that a sum of Rs.1500/- is given as TA/DA and Rs.500/- as transportation allowance to the artisans for participating in fairs/ exhibitions. They are also provided stalls, but some nominal rent is charged which depends on the particular Urban Haat or the local Committee. The Committee desire that a uniform criterion should be prescribed in charging rent for the stalls provided so that artisans of a particular area/ region could not be discriminated against and victimised by the local Committees. The Committee further desire that the Ministry should consider enhancing the amount of TA/DA and transportation allowance so that artisans from far flung areas are reimbursed at least the actual fare and encouraged to attend fairs/ exhibitions.

Reply of the Government

However under National Handicraft Development Programme (NHDP) payment of TA has been increased from Rs.1500/- to Rs.2000/-. In case of artisans from NER, TA is proposed Rs.3000/- per artisans. Besides DA @ Rs.100/- per day has been incorporated.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 19)

The Committee note that, in the past, the Ministry used to entrust any NGO with the job of receiving and processing applications from artisans/ weavers, facilitating their training programmes, etc. However, now, in its place, the Ministry are contemplating to entrust the job to State Corporations and accredited NGOs, based on the impending grading of such NGOs by the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). The Committee desire that the Ministry should expedite the grading of NGOs by TISS and based on the inputs received, they may entrust the job pertaining to the artisans/ weavers to graded and accredited NGOs of established credentials.

Reply of the Government

M/s Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS) has been recently sanctioned a sum of Rs.3,76,200/- per month during the current financial year 2015-16 to streamline the procedure for empanelment of NGOs with TISS in Handicraft sector.

Generally under the National Handloom Development Programme no financial assistance is given to Non-Governmental Organizations. However, if any Non-Governmental Organization is involved in handlooms activities, the same is considered after due recommendation of State Government.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 20)

The Committee observe that the handicraft artisans are covered under the Rajiv Gandhi Shilpi Swasthya Bima Yojana (RGSSBY) and Aam Admi Bima Yojana and are also being supported in indigent circumstances by the Ministry. Similarly, the Handloom Weavers Comprehensive Welfare Scheme with the components of Health Insurance Scheme and Mahatma Gandhi Bima Yojana to access best healthcare and insurance benefits are extended to the Handloom Weavers. So far as the Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY) is concerned, the Committee note that the scheme has been transferred to the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and they are in the process of restructuring the scheme. The Committee desire that the Ministry of Textiles should keep track of the developments and as soon as a system or mechanism is put in place regarding the governance of the RSBY scheme, efforts should be made to cover handicrafts artisans and handloom weavers (both APL & BPL) under the scheme. The Committee would also like to be apprised of the progress made in this regard from time to time.

Reply of the Government

Sanction order has been issued for releases of funds for the year 2015-16 for mastercrafts persons who are getting financial assistance under the scheme for support to artisans under indigent circumstance.

Ministry of Textiles is in constant touch with Ministry of Health and Family Welfare for speedily implementation of Handloom Weavers Comprehensive Welfare Scheme and Rajiv Gandhi Shilpi Swasthya Bima Yojana (RGSSBY) by Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojana (RSBY). Progress of the implementation of schemes is being reviewed in various meeting. The progress in this regard would be apprised to the Committee from time to time. Regarding coverage of handicrafts artisans and handloom weavers (both APL & BPL) under the scheme, the committee observation has been noted for future compliance.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

CHAPTER-III

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS WHICH THE COMMITTEE DO NOT DESIRE TO PURSUE IN VIEW OF THE GOVERNMENT'S REPLY

NIL

CHAPTER-IV

OBSERVATIONS/RECOMMENDATIONS IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT HAVE NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY THE COMMITTEE AND WHICH REQUIRE REITERATION

(Recommendation No. 3)

The Committee reiterate that they are anguished to note that 13 sanctioned Urban Haats were cancelled due to inadequate response from the Implementing Agencies. Though the Ministry have stated that non-availability of land which is free from all encumbrances has been the main reason behind cancellation of the projects, the Committee are surprised to observe that no survey/ study has been conducted by the Ministry to find out the root cause of the poor response from the Implementing Agencies concerned to set up the sanctioned Urban Haats. It, in effect, implies that the Projects were sanctioned without taking various basic factors into consideration because of which 13 sanctioned Urban Haats had to be cancelled. This fact is corroborated by the Ministry's statement that henceforth the office of DC (Handicrafts) will take an undertaking from the State Governments that the land proposed for Urban Haats is free from all encumbrances. While expressing their displeasure over the inadequate efforts on the part of the Ministry leading to the cancellation of 13 sanctioned Urban Haats in States like Maharashtra, U.P., Gujarat, West Bengal, Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Punjab, etc., the Committee impress upon the Ministry to undertake periodical studies/ surveys and plug the extant loopholes before sanctioning projects so as to put an end to the avoidable practice of cancelling sanctioned projects as well as to encourage the Implementing Agencies for taking up viable projects for the socioeconomic development of the poor artisans/ weavers.

Reply of the Government

Noted.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 10)

The Committee are perturbed to note that though the process of issuance of I-Cards commenced in the year 2005, till date out of the identified 68.86 lakh artisans only about 25 lakh artisans could be issued I-Cards. Similarly,

out of the 43.31 lakh identified Handloom weavers, I-Cards have been issued to around 31.13 lakh weavers across the country since 2009. The Ministry have reasoned that despite shortage of staff in the field units, they have been able to issue I-Cards to that many artisans/ weavers. The Ministry have further submitted that as per the scheme and the target fixed by the Government, 2 lakh I-Cards will be issued every year during the 12th Plan period. The Committee do not accept the contention of the Ministry for non-issuance of I-Cards to all the artisans/ weavers, firstly because the issue of shortage of staff has to be resolved by the Ministry themselves, and, secondly, the prescription of issuance of 2 lakh I-Cards every year should not in any way prevent the Ministry from issuing more than 2 lakh I-Cards every year. Moreover, if only 2 lakh I-Cards are issued every year, it will take many more years to provide I-Cards to the remaining identified artisans/ weavers. Therefore, instead of furnishing unacceptable reasons for the delay on their part, the Ministry should urgently decentralise the process of issuance of I-Cards and organise awareness camps with the help of District Administrations and Implementing Agencies to proactively accelerate issuance of I-Cards to the left out artisans/ weavers in a time bound manner so that they are not only able to avail facilities like social security schemes but also participate in fairs/ exhibitions, both within and outside the country.

Reply of the Government

As per third Handloom Census (2009-10) there are 43.31 lakh handloom & allied workers across the country. Of this, 38.468 lakh are 18 years & above (Adult) to whom photo identity cards were required to be issued. However, on the request of some NER states Manipur in particular, Plastic Identity Cards (PIC) were not printed. Similarly, for some border area States like West Bengal requested for not issuing PICs to avoid migration from the adjoining states. Thus, only 31.13 lakh I-Cards have been prepared and distributed through States concerned. State Governments concerned have now been asked to conduct survey and issue I/card themselves for the left out handloom weavers/allied workers.

For handicraft artisans, advertisement has been published in leading Newspapers regarding submission of fresh application form of I.Card of handicrafts artisans at concern M&SECs/field offices of the DC(Handicrafts).

Proposal is under consideration for decentralising the process of preparing of I.Cards of handicrafts artisans.

Awareness drive/Camps are being planned at each M&SEC/Field office for I.Cards for handicrafts artisans.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 13)

The Committee note that for selection of artisans to participate in fairs/ exhibitions, the Ministry floats an advertisement in newspapers stating that whoever has not taken part in any fair/ exhibition in the previous one year and is interested in taking part should apply at the nearest Handicrafts Office. Once the applications are received, the artisans are selected through a system of lottery and sent to particular fairs and festivals. The Committee are of the considered opinion that the selection procedure of the artisans' participation in fairs/ festivals should be made more transparent and foolproof so that the same group of artisans is not repeatedly picked up and each and every artisan in the country may get an opportunity to showcase his/her product in popular Melas/ Bazaars.

Reply of the Government

For participation of artisans in the exhibitions/fairs, an advertisement is floated in the leading newspapers. After receiving applications, the same are scrutinized at various stages and due care is given that there is no repetition and allotment be made to genuine artisans by following approved guidelines. Moreover, preference is also given to the award winning artisans/weavers for participation in the melas/event.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

(Recommendation No. 18)

In this context, the Committee is constraint to note that a paltry sum of Rs.100/- per day is given as stipend to the weavers for attending any training or design development programme. Needless to say, it dissuades the weavers from attending such programmes as they can get at least Rs.250/- per day under MNREGA. As the Guidelines in this regard are under modification, the Committee would like to impress upon the Ministry to finalise the Guidelines soon and ensure that the stipend amount is reasonably enhanced so as to motivate the weavers to attend training programmes.

Reply of the Government

Presently, stipend to the trainees is being given as per the rates prescribed for semi-skilled workers by the O/o Chief Labour Commissioner, Ministry of Labour & Employment, vide their order dated 30.03.2015.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

CHAPTER-V

OBSERVATION/RECOMMENDATION IN RESPECT OF WHICH REPLIES OF THE GOVERNMENT ARE INTERIM IN NATURE

(Recommendation No. 12)

The Committee further recommend that the Ministry should make consistent efforts to facilitate an effective tie-up of the local artisans with big outlets/ emporia in the fairs/ exhibitions organised wherein the artisans can directly interact with, and sell their products to, the big outlets. As discussed during the study visit of the Committee to Mangalore in January 2015, the Committee also impress upon the Ministry to take up with the authorities concerned the matter of introducing/ setting up of booths/kiosks at major tourist hubs, Airports, Railway Stations, etc. for better marketing of the products of the artisans.

Reply of the Government

Noted for compliance. Concerted efforts are being made by taking up the matter with the concerned authorities.

(U.O.No.1/49/2014-Parl., Dated 05.11.2015)

New Delhi;
11 March, 2016
21 Phalguna,1937 (Saka)

DR. VIRENDRA KUMAR
CHAIRPERSON
STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR

APPENDIX-I

STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR

(2015-16)

Minutes of the Twelfth Sitting of the Committee

The Committee sat on 11th March, 2016 from 1030 hrs. to 1100 hrs. in Room No. `131' (Chairperson's Chamber), Parliament House Annexe, New Delhi.

PRESENT

Dr. Virendra Kumar - Chairperson

MEMBERS
LOK SABHA

2. Dr. Boora Narsaiah Goud
3. Shri C.N. Jayadevan
4. Shri Kaushalendra Kumar
5. Shri R. Parthipan
6. Shri Hariom Singh Rathore
7. Shri Naba Kumar Sarania

RAJYA SABHA

8. Shri Nazir Ahmed Laway
9. Shri Aayanur Manjunatha
10. Shri P.L. Punia
11. Shri Rajaram
12. Haji Abdul Salam
13. Shri Ravi Prakash Verma
14. Shri N. Gokulakrishnan

SECRETARIAT

1. Shri K. Vijayakrishnan - Addl. Secretary
2. Shri Ashok Sajwan - Director
3. Shri D.R. Mohanty - Addl. Director
4. Smt. Archana Srivastva - Under Secretary

2. At the outset, the Chairperson welcomed the Members to the sitting of the Committee, convened for consideration and adoption of two Draft Action Taken Reports. Giving an overview of the Recommendations made/reiterated in both the Draft Action Taken Reports, the Chairperson requested the Members to give their suggestions on them, if any.

3. The Committee, then, took up for consideration the following Draft Action Taken Reports and adopted them after some discussions:

(i) XX XX XX XX

(ii) Draft Action Taken Report on the Observations/Recommendations of the Committee contained in their Ninth Report (Sixteenth Lok Sabha) on 'Review of Urban Haats'.

4. The Committee then authorized the Chairperson to present the Reports to both the Houses.

The Committee then adjourned.

XX Do not pertain to this report

APPENDIX-II

(Vide Para No. 3 of the Introduction)

ANALYSIS OF ACTION TAKEN BY THE GOVERNMENT ON RECOMMENDATIONS CONTAINED IN THE NINTH REPORT OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LABOUR (SIXTEENTH LOK SABHA)

		Total	**Percentage**
I.	Total number of Recommendations	20	
II.	Observations/Recommendations which have been accepted by Government (Recommendation Para. Nos., 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19 and 20)	15	75%
III.	Observations/Recommendations which the Committee do not desire to pursue in view of Government's replies- **NIL**	00	00
IV.	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which Government's replies have not been accepted by the Committee and which requires reiteration – (Recommendation Para. Nos. 3,10, 13 and 18)	04	20%
V.	Observations/Recommendations in respect of which replies of Government are of interim in nature (Recommendation Para. Nos. 12)	01	5%
			100%